4. Burgess E-4,5 (1926-1927) 1928 AF12 North China AF12

raised by the guilds when the prices of food rise or when money values fall. He shows that there is a very definite customary standard of living on the one hand for the unskilled laborers, and on the other, for the skilled artisans. The masters of the shops and stores recognize this standard and are quick to grant the needed increase whenever circumstances warrant. Custom rather than definite guild action largely determines wages in these guilds. The same is true, perhaps to a lesser degree, in relation to prices. No detailed study has been made of the prices of most of the products made or sold by the Peking guildsmen, but here also custom is probably a determining factor in establishing what is practically a guild rate for certain products.

The only evidence that we can find of any direct effort on the part of Peking guilds to standardize products is the attempt of the Rug Guild to set a definite price for rugs with a definite number of threads to the inch. This attempt failed because a poor quality of wool was introduced into the rugs of many of the merchants.[1] There is, however, evidence of guild control of weights and measures.[2] When a new store is organized for the sale of dyes, after the dues are paid, the guild presents the new store with a set of standard scales.

It is possible that in the earlier days there was more of an effort to standardize the goods made or sold. However, here also custom plays a very powerful rôle. In Pao Ting Fu, a large city south of Peking, certain definite types of brass teapots are made. There were only three or four very carefully fixed patterns. Other kinds of teapots simply were not made. Not until an enterprising foreigner drew other designs could these merchants be induced to produce anything but the fixed standard makes. Uniformity of design and process is also characteristic of many other crafts.

[1] Chu and Blaisdell, *op. cit.*, p. 17.

[2] *Cf.* pp. 197-198.

In most parts of China, age is counted differently from that
805 in western countries. The general rule for calculating age in this country is that a person on reaching the first day of a new year will automatically increase his age by one year, no matter on what day of the year he was born. Thus, if two persons are born in the same year, both will be considered as two years of age on the new year's day of the following year; it is immaterial if the birthday of one falls on the first day, and that of another falls on the last day, of the year. It will be seen that the Chinese method of calculating age ignores altogether the actual duration of life and takes the passing of the new year alone as the basis of calculation. There is no doubt that this way of calculation, while saving the trouble of remembering one's birthday, is far from being accurate and often leads to an erroneous conception of age. Take the extreme case of a child born at 11.00 p.m. on the new year's eve, for instance; he will be considered two years old at 1.00 a.m. on the new year's day whereas, in fact, he is only two hours old! By assuming it to be two years, he has, so to speak, cheated two years minus two hours which he did not live.

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128 In conducting the present inquiry, effort had been made to ascertain the actual age of the members of various families. But as some families were rather disinclined to supply information on the birthdays of their members, and some others were unable to furnish knowledge of the matter, the effort had to be abandoned. The ages of various persons were therefore accepted as told and in order to adjust them to the number of years they had actually lived for purposes of computing the adult equivalent, all the ages were uniformly reduced by one year each. For lack of a better and more exact method of calculation, and assuming that all the reported ages on the average exceeded their actual ages by one year each, the reduction as is here adopted may be said to be the only practicable way of calculating the Chinese age.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

804 If the Chinese practice of calculating age gives rise to an erroneous conception of one's actual duration of life, then the

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Chinese system of measures and scales would wreck many a study which involves quantitative determination. It is perhaps a truism to state that the family budget inquiry, being a quantitative study, is determined for its success mainly by the existence of adequate and reliable standards of measurement. In a country where certain measurements of daily use, such as scales and weights, have already been standardised and universally adopted throughout the whole extent of its realm, such a study is greatly facilitated by the fact that one is not bothered by any measurement problem. The Chinese scales and measures, however, are full of confusion. All who have been conducting the present inquiry have, therefore, to determine the various measures which are used in recording the daily accounts.

The fundamental trouble with the Chinese measures appears to be that they are not uniform, though they have, as a matter of fact, definite systems.[1] Broadly speaking, not only there are as many measures as there are districts or localities, but there may be as many measures as there are things to be measured. It has been said that for the foot measure alone, its variety in Peking is sixty. This, doubtless, is an exaggeration, as according to an investigation conducted in 1912 by the Chihli Commercial Museum, only forty-two kinds of foot measures were found in the whole province. As a matter of fact, there must exist more varieties than this, for in the absence of any effective governmental control or supervision and in view of the crudity of the manufacturing process of Chinese measures, it is reasonable to suppose that they are all more or less different from one another. Below are given the principal weight and length measures prevailing in Peking with their metric equivalents:

Weights	*Lengths Measures*
One *kwan-ping* catty=604.5 grams	Tailor's foot-rule=33.2 cm.
One *ku-ping* catty=596.8 grams	New official foot-rule=31.9 cm.
One *ching-ping* catty=562.8 grams	Builder's foot-rule=31.2 cm.

It will be seen that the difference between the various measures is quite wide, and that still wider differences would be

[1] Cf., for instance, D. K. Lieu, *China's Industries and Finance*, pp. 115-120, Peking, 1927.

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804 found, if the same measures in the whole province are checked up. In this investigation the *ching-ping* catty and the builder's foot-rule are used, both being standard measures in Peking stores, —the former for the grocers and flour-dealers and the latter for the drapers—and for the purpose of presentation the data of these measures are all reduced to their metric equivalents.

CURRENCY

436 Although this is hardly the place to discuss in detail the Chinese currency system, yet some observations on it are needed for an understanding of the nature of incomes and expenses of various families. Yuan, the silver dollar, is the standard money in this country. Though the tael still survives and is used in a great many business transactions, yet the yuan is indisputably the most universal medium of exchange. Theoretically, one yuan or dollar is equal to one hundred cents usually known as "big money", for which are issued, as token money, copper coins of two denominations of the nominal value of one and two cents each—this applies only to Peking, and north China generally, as systems of copper coinage vary in different parts of this country—and silver coins of two denominations of the nominal value of ten and twenty cents each. The Chinese dollar, it should be pointed out, is treated as a commodity and its value is determined by the amount of silver it contains. Because the small silver coins, originally issued as token money, and later known as "small money", contain much less amount of silver in proportion to the denominations they represent and have been freely minted in several provinces in great quantities, their value is, therefore, not determined by what they designate nominally but mainly by their metallic content and by their supply. Thus, in actual fact, ten ten-cent-pieces or dimes are only worth nine-tenths of one yuan and sometimes less, though, in theory, the depreciation is unwarranted. As regards the coppers, which are also coined in abundance in different provinces, their value is also generally determined both by their supply and their metallic

7: Gamble S-5 (1926-1927) 1933 AF12 North China AF12

was completed, the Nationalist forces captured Peking, changed its name to Peiping, and moved the capital to Nanking.

Definition of Terms

Age refers to age figured according to the Chinese system. An infant is considered to be one year old when born and two years old on the next New Year's day. The usual method of figuring the equivalent age according to the Western system is to deduct one year from the Chinese age. As the Chinese ages have been used, the limits of the five-year age groups have been set as 1 to 5, 6 to 10, rather than, under 5, 5 to 9, et cetera, the usual limits when ages are figured to the latest birthday.

Budget refers to actual income and expenditure rather than to any plan of family finance. Family budget and family account are used synonymously.

Business Expense refers to items spent in connection with the business by which the family earns its living, such as ricksha rent, ricksha taxes, push-cart rent, business supplies, wages of workers doing other than domestic work. If entered in the family accounts, these items have been omitted from the expense side and have been deducted from the reported current income.

Capital Expenditure is money spent for a capital item, loaned to others, used to reduce accounts payable, invested with a savings society, deposited in a store or bank. If paid out of capital income, it has been omitted from the account, as it would then represent a reinvestment of capital funds rather than the expenditure of part of the family's current account.

Capital Income is money received from capital sources, the sale of property, borrowing, the reduction of accounts receivable, savings. Even though it represents money received, capital income has been omitted from the account unless it was used to meet current expenses.

A *Catty* is a Chinese unit of weight. It varies somewhat, depending upon the particular kind of catty used, but ordinarily it is taken as equivalent to 1.33 pounds.

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vance. Although it is not shown in the accounts, it seems fairly safe to assume that the landlord gave the fractional amounts to his servants as one of their perquisites, and to pay for any work they had done in preparing the house for the new tenant.

When asking a Chinese family how large their house is, one does not ask them how many rooms they have, but how many *chien.* A *chien* is ordinarily the space between two roof trusses. It is not an absolute unit, but varies in size from seven by eight, to nine by twelve feet. The average is probably about eight by eight, or eight by nine, feet. A large room would count as several *chien* and a small one sometimes as only one-half a *chien,* but for our families the number of *chien* and the number of rooms was probably so nearly the same that we have used the terms interchangeably.

One hundred and twenty-four families, 44 per cent, were living in one room; 53 in two rooms; and 34 in three rooms.

Only three of the 30 families with incomes of less than $15 a month had more than one room, and none had more than two. Of the 116 families with incomes of less than $25 a month, only three had more than two rooms. No family had four rooms until the income was more than $35 a month, and no family had five rooms until the income was over $60 a month. One family in the $50 group was living in one room; and it was not until the income was more than $60 a month that all the families had at least two rooms; and not until the income was more than $100 a month that they all had four rooms. Six families had houses with ten or more *chien.* One of these was in the $60 group. The others all had incomes